

## IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 1-18, 20-22, 25, 27, 30-32, 36 and 37. Additions are underlined and deletions are shown in strikeout text.

1. (Currently amended) A method of evaluating a business proposal, comprising the steps of:

gathering information on the proposal, wherein the information comprises revenue elements of the proposal, risks, descriptive information, business issues, business goals, a value of the proposal, a cost of the proposal, methods of achievement of the proposal, and an innovation value of the proposal, and wherein the proposal is an alliance, an acquisition, an equity venture, a partnership, or a venture ;

accessing information on similar or analogous proposals; and

evaluating the information by computer ; and

ranking the proposals.

2. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein information gathered further comprises at least one of ~~revenue elements of the proposal, risks, descriptive information, business issues, business goals, a value of the proposal, methods of achievement of the proposal, and an innovation value of the proposal~~ business environmental information, business issues and goals, financial information, and methods of achievement of the proposal.

3. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the information gathering step further comprises answering predetermined questions on at least one template stored in a computer and the answers to at least one predetermined question call up at least one more template of predetermined questions, and the computer uses answers to said questions to evaluate the proposal.

4. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 3 1, wherein the ~~answers to at least one predetermined question call up at least one more template of predetermined questions, and the computer uses answers to said questions to evaluate the proposal~~ proposals are evaluated by calculating at least one of a cost, a revenue stream, a return

on average assets, a return on investment, a return on equity, and internal rate of return, and a net present value.

5. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, ~~wherein the business proposal is from a service provider to a customer~~ further comprising evaluating risks of the proposal as high or as normal.

6. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 5 1, further comprising gathering information on a customer for the proposal, ~~the agents of the customer or employees of the customer.~~

7. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1 ~~wherein information concerning the customer, the customer's experience with the provider, or the provider's experience with other customers is available in a customer relationship repository of information~~ further comprising displaying the rankings with a graphical user interface.

8. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 4- 6 wherein information concerning the experience of the provider in providing the service is available in at least one database.

9. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein information concerning the benefits ~~to~~ of the customer proposal is available in at least one database.

10. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the cost of the proposal is calculated as a revenue stream to ~~the~~ a service provider.

11. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 4 10, further comprising the step of calculating a benefit to ~~the~~ a customer of providing said service to said customer.

12. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, ~~wherein information gathered for calculation further comprises an assessment of~~ further comprising assessing the proposal in light of present business considerations, risks of the proposal, or financial considerations of the proposal.

13. (Currently amended) The method of Claim ~~2~~ 1, wherein at least some of the information is gathered through the Internet, and further comprising the steps of updating the information and ~~recalculating the cost~~ reevaluating the information.

14. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the proposal comprises an offer of a service from the a provider, and further comprising the step of calculating a way ~~for the customer to pay for the~~ proposal service.

15. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the ~~proposal is an alliance, an acquisition, an equity venture, a partnership, an offer for a service, or a venture~~ proposals are ranked by displaying at least one of a numerical ranking or a pseudo-numerical output.

16. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the ~~input~~ information is provided through a graphical user interface, and the input is in a form of brief numerical or pseudo-numerical outputs.

17. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein ~~the output~~ an output is provided through a graphical user interface, and the output is in a form of brief numerical or pseudo-numerical outputs.

18. (Currently amended) A method of evaluating a business proposal, comprising:

searching at least one database for information concerning ~~the customer~~ a business partner, the proposal and a business environment , wherein the information includes cost drivers, revenue drivers, markets served, risks of the proposal, customers served, and a competitive advantage;

providing financial data concerning the proposal to a computer , wherein the financial data includes revenue elements of the proposal, a cost of the proposal, and an innovation value of the proposal;

proposing at least one structure for the business proposal, using said financial data ~~information~~ and information from the database , wherein the structure is an alliance, an acquisition, an equity venture, a partnership, or a venture; and

calculating an advantage of the business proposal.

19. (Original) The method of Claim 18, wherein the database comprises a client relationship repository of information.

20. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 18, ~~wherein the database comprises at least one site on the Internet~~ further comprising evaluating risks of the proposal as high or as normal.

21. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 18, wherein the step of entering providing financial data comprises retrieving financial data from at least one database.

22. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 18, further comprising the step of entering information concerning at least one of risks, descriptive information, business environment, business issues, business goals, a value of the proposal, and methods of achievement of the proposal, for use by a computer in determining ~~an~~ the advantage of the proposal.

23. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the information is entered through at least one template stored in the computer.

24. (Original) The method of Claim 23, wherein the information entered through at least one template calls up at least one template of predetermined questions, and the computer uses answers to said questions to evaluate the proposal.

25. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 18, wherein the advantage is calculated as at least one ~~revenue stream~~ of a cost, a revenue stream, a return on average assets, a return on investment, a return on equity, an internal rate of return, and a net present value.

26. (Original) The method of Claim 18, wherein the advantage is calculated as at least one revenue stream and includes at least one example of how to pay for the proposal.

27. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 18, wherein more than one proposal or structure is proposed, and further comprising the step of ~~comparing the advantage of~~ ranking each proposal or structure.

28. (Original) The method of Claim 18, wherein the advantage is recalculated by a step of entering updated data into the computer.

29. (Original) The method of Claim 18, wherein the step of searching comprises a search of at least one Internet site, and further comprising the steps of updating the search periodically, and updating the computer calculation of an advantage periodically.

30. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 18, wherein the ~~input~~ information is provided through a graphical user interface, and the ~~input~~ output is in a form of brief numerical or pseudo-numerical outputs.

31. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 18, ~~wherein the output is provided~~ further comprising a step of providing an output through a graphical user interface, ~~and wherein~~ the output is in a form of brief numerical or pseudo-numerical outputs.

32. (Currently amended) A computer system for evaluating a proposal, comprising:

a computer processor;

at least one memory operably connected to said computer, said memory containing data relevant to the proposal, wherein the data comprises revenue elements of the proposal, risks, descriptive information, business issues, business goals, a value of the proposal, a cost of the proposal, methods of achievement of the proposal, and an innovation value of the proposal; and

a computer program for evaluating the proposal, said program residing in said computer or in said memory, wherein the proposal is an alliance, an acquisition, an equity venture, a partnership, or a venture, and the computer program calculates an output helpful for evaluating the proposal.

33. (Original) The computer system of Claim 32, wherein the proposal is from a provider of goods or services to a customer.

34. (Original) The computer system of Claim 32 wherein the data comprises information concerning the proposal, a customer, experience of the provider with the customer, or experience the provider has had with this or other customers.

35. (Original) The computer system of Claim 32 wherein the computer program further comprises at least one template of predetermined questions, and the computer program uses the answers to said questions to evaluate the proposal.

36. (Currently amended) The computer system of Claim 32 wherein the answers to at least one predetermined question ~~calls~~ call up at least one more template

of predetermined questions, and the computer program uses the answers to said questions to evaluate the proposal.

37. (Currently amended) The computer system of Claim 32 wherein information concerning the customer is available is in a customer relationship repository.

38. (Original) The computer system of Claim 32, wherein the computer program uses a technique of control-action-response in seeking and inputting information from a user of the computer system.

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